

The Viet Nam Triple Deuce, Inc.

An Association of 2 Bn. (Mech)

22nd Infantry Regiment

Viet Nam Veterans

Together Then.....Together Again!.....

Thanks for Being There...&...Welcome Home



Vol. 14, No. 4

December 2008

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**If you received a membership form
and an envelope
with your Newsletter
YOUR DUES ARE DUE.**

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**The Vietnam Triple Deuce
Website**

www.vietnamtripledeuce.org

**Mario Salazar HHC 65-67
Steve Irvine B 68 - 69**

Hello Brothers and friends,

It's hard to believe that this 2008 year is finally over. I don't recall a year in recent memory that has provided as many tests of character and faith as this one. Other than holding our latest greatest reunion ever in Washington D.C. in May, the events of the year have often been tough to deal with.

Topping the downside list of course is our loss of Awb Norris just after the D.C. reunion and the passing of his wife, Jo from cancer on November 19. Everything that made up Awb Norris will be missed, but fortunately for us and our organization Awb didn't hoard his strength of character, his leadership talents, or his high standards of personal conduct. He passed all of these things on to every member of this outfit that ever met him. I'm confident that any of us who ever knew Awb will remember his make up and try to make him proud of all we do for VN222 and each other.

Hey, Seattle is only a bit over nine months away. Wow! We'd better start making those reservations and looking into travel plans. Speaking of travel plans, a group of us is looking in to the possibility of travelling from the Midwest to Seattle on Amtrak, hopefully together. I hope to have details in time for the Spring newsletter. I'm also thinking that a rail car full of Triple Deucers going through the Rockies would be a hoot.

Happy 2009 to each and every one of you.

**Dick Nash
A & HHC 69**

Editor's Comments

At Christmas time I found myself doing the grandfatherly duty of imparting values. We have nine grandchildren ranging in ages from 3 months to 16 years. We want our precious ones to know that Christmas has four aspects and if one is missing or the focus is too much on another aspect, the true meaning is lost. Obviously Christmas is a **religious holiday**. At a very early age our little ones are taught about the birth of Baby Jesus, his ministry and the significance of that one solitary life. The other factors are associated. Christmas is a **family time**; a time to be surrounded by and feel the unconditional love of many generations of family members. Christmas is a time for **giving**. . .recognizing that the monetary value of a gift is not important but the love with which it was created or selected or the enthusiasm with which a service is performed makes it special. Christmas is, likewise, a time for **receiving**. Blessings great and small are ours to be appreciated. Our receiving allows others the opportunity to be givers.

The Triple Deuce holds similar meaning to me. The same faith that helped us survive wartime experiences and has guided our life since our return to country is very present. We are one family of Brothers. The elder veterans offer historical insight; the younger ones add a new depth. We extend the fellowship to our families as well. We all have much to give to the organization. Each Brother brings unique talents to make the organization strong. By accepting and appreciating the contributions of others each of us grows. Anyway. . .that's how it seems to me.

Editor's note: The newsletter was supposed to be out before Christmas but due to submission delays. . .it was not. I have tried to make needed changes but some items were impossible to edit without changing the meaning. My apologies.

Dan Streit D/69

HELP YOUR COMPANY LOCATOR...

As we enter 2009 with thoughts of gathering next October in Seattle, I ask you to remember we have Triple Deuce Brothers who may not have been welcomed home. The volunteer Triple Deuce locators are requesting your help in finding our Brothers and getting them to Seattle. **Listed below** are the company locators and email points of contact for each. I ask you to take a couple of moments and send them any leads on new finds you might have. (Cut this out and put on the "frig" in case you come across something to help the locators. Also check out WELCOME HOME BROTHER on the Triple Deuce website for more ideas to find our Brothers.) To close out 2008 I want to again publically thank the Triple Deuce locators and our Board of Directors for the valiant efforts that made the D.C. Reunion one of the best ever.

Chief Locator - Lon Oakley, Jr. (Alpha 1969) ldo82288@hotmail.com

Phone: **210-878-7072**

Alpha Co. Locator – Gary Hartt (Alpha 1965-67) gchartt@bctonline.com

Phone: **530-632-6955**

Bravo Co. Locator – Clark L. Lohmann (Bravo 1967-68) clark222@cox.net

Phone: **402-731-4819**

Dean Springer (Bravo 1967-68) dsprin@hotmail.com

Phone: **912-754-9395**

Charlie Co. Locator – Bob Owens (Charlie 1967-68)

bobowens222@hotmail.com

Phone: **936-569-8407**

Delta Co. Locator – Dan Streit (Delta 1969) D222.@nckcn.com

Phone: **785-738-2419**

HHC Co. Locator – Burt Lockwood (HHC) apftin@hotmail.com

Recon Platoon Locator – Erik Opsahl epopsahlw@aol.com

Phone: **608-838-4226**

Share Your Triple Deuce Pictures with Others

We are encouraging anyone with pictures of his experience in the triple deuce to have those pictures published on the Triple Deuce website. We particularly enjoy pictures of each other with names identified. It helps us all remember and preserve our common experience.

You can view the current albums at <http://www.vietnamtripledeuce.org/> look for the line that says "[NEW!! Vietnam Photo Albums, can you identify?](#)" Then click on that line to explore the current photos.

Send a note to Steve Irvine (sirvine@us.ibm.com) and let him know what you would like to publish. You will be asked to send a few samples to work out the kinks in the way the pictures are formatted, followed by the rest when we have that accomplished.

To send the samples:

1. Scan five of your pictures and convert them to an electronic "jpg" format. Scanning at a rate of 300 dots per inch is adequate for the website. Any higher resolution is lost, any lower is too grainy. If you can't scan at any other resolution, send me samples and I will work something out with you.

2. Rename each picture so that I get a description (the picture name will be the description that gets published). You can use a name of up to 200 characters or so and that becomes the description for your picture. For instance, a typical scanned picture name might look like this: "rp000045.jpg". Change that picture name to (for example) "Chu Chi Basecamp, 1968. John Smith and Sam Gunner from left to right". When you send me the picture with that name, I post it directly and the album picks up the description from the name.

3. Also send me one picture of yourself, again labeled as above.

4. Next, Provide the following information for the "Who AM I" page inside each album.

Name:

Date you arrived in VN;

Date you left

Company(s)/ unit(s) you were in
Platoon(s)

Squad(s)

Email address: (optional)

Phone: (optional)

Nickname:

Comments: (you can write as much as you like here, from a few notes about your tour to ½ of a book. As long as you provide it in an electronic document, it can be published. Everyone is encouraged to write something about themselves, or their tour, or their friends).

Lastly: The site/webmasters are flexible. If you are shy, just tell us enough to identify yourself and your dates in country, or if you have special requests for publication let us know. We can publish up to 81 pictures per album, and there is no "minimum" number required.

Steve Irvine

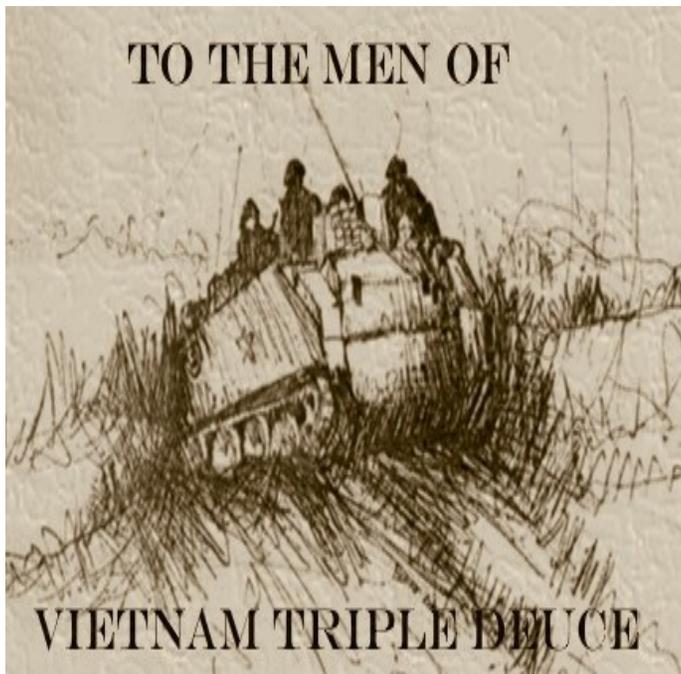
sirvine@us.ibm.com

B Co. 25th ID, Oct.68 to May 69

Charlie, 3/22 Web Site

Some of you may have seen **Bill Schwindt's** request for a photo of **Douglas J. Sullivan**, KIA, 1-8-67 while assigned to Charlie 2/22. Douglas had gone through Basic and had been with 3/22 before being transferred to 2/22. Bill wanted the photo so that it can be posted on Charlie, 3/22's Web Site. Bill told me that they are attempting to post photos of all their KIA's and Heroes section too, 66-67. If you would like to see what their work in progress looks like go to www.c322association.org Once the site opens, click on the Enter Here doorway and then look for the KIA LIST tab on the menu bar at the top of the page.

Jim May



***Vietnam Triple Deuce
Tribute
Limited Editions
Only 12 copies left -
Your cost : \$2.00 for postage
Mike Pounds has put a
tribute together and would
like to share it with oth-
ers. He has 12 CDs and
would like those who are
interested to cover the cost
of shipping. Send inquires
to:***

Mike H. Pounds
150 Tidwell Dr.
Alpharetta, GA 30004

cuchimadmanmike@yahoo.com
B Co. 25th ID Aug. 70 to Nov. 70

Lens of a Nineteen Year Old

I don't know how many of us think about various specific times during the VN War. I relive Soui Tre many times and often wonder what other perspectives guys had. I have talked to Captain White and 1 Lt Frydrychowski. My lens is from that of a 19-year-old squad leader drafted in the US Army with a bunch of guys and sent off to a place I read about in the newspaper.

The night of 20 March 1967, we were told to remain in the tracks as we may be trying to provide support for 2/77 arty and the 1/12 infantry. So we put out some LP's in front and waited. We were told that Recon was trying to find a way through the bamboo to get to LZ Gold and would be doing so during the night. (We don't do that stuff at night with the apc's). At morning twilight **Captain White** had us moving. My track was last of the Charlie Company on that morning. Abruptly we were halted and everyone did an about face, putting my track in the lead. We were w/o a platoon leader for specified reasons and **Sgt Sammy Kay** had been in my track and now switched over to **Sgt Dietz's**, the second track. He was the acting PL.

We followed our tracks back and came to a place where Recon had made a way through the bamboo. There was an urgency that years later would be debated who would get there. There was no river. Just mud and bamboo. It was thicker than a dog infected with ticks. . Recon's engines were smoking and they had pushed the bamboo aside and were resting the tracks on top of some of it.

We were told that the LZ was being over run and would go in guns blazing. I am 19 years old and not related to John Wayne. A lot of things were going through my head at that point. One of the first things on my mind was, I have the rest of Charlie Company coming in right behind me, and probably the rest of the battalion.

I told **Larry Mason** my driver. "Go fast and don't stop until I told him to, about 75 yards and pull a 90 degree right, and hold." As we did I saw the

105's off to my left with some of the barrels laying flat to the ground and the faces of some GI's with a sign of relief on their faces I hadn't seen before.

We started taking rounds from our front and right. They were ricocheting off the track. **Dan Morris**, my 50 gunner could see the VC crawling and opened up. We also were handing grenades to him with the pins already pulled. He threw them, and said they were coming back.

At some point the track became hung up and both tracks were spinning high off the ground. My concern was an RPG. I told Larry and Dan we were getting out and to get a bump off of the high ground and find us. When we opened the door in the ramp more rounds ricocheted off the door and then started to stop. An eleven-man squad inside the track seemed to never exist and we got out with our squad of four. Dan kept firing the 50 into the bamboo at the horizon above our heads and the four of us got out in front in the open with 30-40 yards between us.

Forty plus years, and how long engagement occurs in combat define my sense of time here. I think it was 30-40 minutes at most. We faced the sun coming up to the east. We checked out the bodies as we passed them, some of them being GI's. We arrived at the edge of the bamboo that encircled the LZ and proceeded a little further. I saw a huge termite mound with feet sticking out from behind it, two sets. As we came around the mound, they looked like they were asleep or praying. I poked one with my M 16.

At this point Sgt Kay and Sgt Dietz's track pulled up beside. Neither of the VC had a mark on them. They were pristine. Shirts were beige muslin with clean black bottoms. I took their pulse at the temples and they were cold with no pulse. Some one said the older one maybe about 25, had a wedding ring on and to cut his finger off and take it. The other one looked about 14. I said if you want the f-----ring come and get it yourself. I thought they were medics.

Larry Mason caught up with us about this time and the rest of the morning was policing bodies, as Chinooks and Hueys were coming and going. We had shot up most of our 50 ammo and were concerned about re supply. That was when I saw the first tank coming across the LZ. The 2/34 Armor had arrived also and interspersed between us.

Sgt Kay said my track and Sgt Dietz's would be used in support of Recon going out to recover a body of a pilot of a Bird Dog. **Lt Frydrychowski** and his Recon platoon led out about 1k and we halted and waited for 5-10 minutes, when they came racing back with a recovered body from the plane.

It is difficult to remember 24/7 from 40 years ago and little things come back with conversations with guys. A lot of brass decided this was a good time to fly around and come down to see what went on.

As we left the LZ the next day, the last image I have is the Anti-aircraft gun sitting tucked up in a corner of the LZ coated with napalm.

I would like to know who the general of the 271 and 272 VC regiment that kept trying was. First Soui Tre then Burt then Dau Tieng.

Norm, you were right. We really pissed them off at Soui Tre.

I hear guys complain about their officers and what they make us do. Captain White and 1Lt Frydrychowski pushed us draftees through basic, and all of the other training.. We believed in our leaders because they believed in us.

George Dahl C 66/67

Seattle
October 8-11, 2009



Dick Nash, president of the Triple Deuce, presented **Ival Lawhon Jr.** with a certificate naming him a Distinguished Member of the Battalion during a recent ceremony in St. Joseph, Mo.



Members of the Triple Deuce and the 22nd Infantry Regiment Society, seated, **Dan Streit**, left, and **Jim Nelson**, right; standing are, from the left, **Jim May**, **Dick Nash**, **Ival Lawhon Jr.**, **Skip Fahel** and **Martin Oelklaus**.

Ival Lawhon Honored by Brothers

Finding himself unable to attend the Washington D.C. Reunion and spend time with his Triple Deuce Brothers, Ival Lawhon was open about his health concerns. Feeling his absence members of the Triple Deuce and the 22nd Infantry Regiment Society decided to visit Ival in St. Joseph, Missouri and honor him there.

The guys enjoyed visiting and viewing Ival's extensive collection of military insignias before dinner and a ceremony presenting the Distinguished Member of the Battalion award. The wives in attendance had their own pre-ceremony entertainment.

In a recent e-mail Ival shares the status of his illness

As most of you are aware I was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer earlier this year at the Mayo Clinic. I finished six weeks of radiation and five weeks of chemo and feel pretty good. I have my appetite back after losing 120 pounds. I am putting weight back on and am fully retired from work.

I just received word from Mayo's that the cancer is not operable and that is the purpose of the E-mail.

I want to thank you all for your support and prayers. Renee and I are not slowing down, in fact if anything we are trying to speed up. We leave Wednesday for a week in Colorado Springs and will be attending the Combat Infantryman's Association annual meeting.

Other short trips are in the planning so take care and keep in touch! I appreciate hearing from you all!

Ival and his wife Renee are active members of the Triple Deuce and enjoy all messages.

Ival Lawhorn Jr. A 67/68
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St. Joseph, MO 64501
816-279-5598
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9222 Miles of Rolling Reunion

On October 16th, I left my house in Vancouver, Washington for a road trip to visit with as many of my combat brothers as possible, and also a few relatives. The trip included visits with nine Charlie Company 2/22 guys that I had served with in Vietnam from 67-68, and some relatives that I had not seen in 30 years. When I arrived home on November 9th, my car had logged over 9000 miles traveling through 22 states. Two of the guys, I had not seen since Vietnam over 40 years ago. The following is how the trip happened.

About the 8th of October, I placed a call to **David Milewski**, C 2/22 67/68, and asked him if he would like to go on a little trip with me to see some of our buddies from Vietnam. (David was in my squad for a time when I first arrived at Charlie Company in Sept of 1967. He later went to the Weapons Platoon, after his track hit a mine. When he arrived back to the field, they assigned him to the Weapons platoon where he spent the remainder of his tour.) He called me back the next day and said he could join me for 10 days, starting the 19th of October. The deal was, wherever we were at when the 10 days ended, he would catch a plane home. The trip was on, and I had a combat brother going with me for 10 days! WOW, the Rolling Reunion trip became reality. The first leg of the trip was set. Drive 1000 miles and pick up David for the trip on the 18th.

I called to let him know that I would be at his house on the 18th, I then asked if he would be willing to have a little mini-reunion at his house to get together with **Ken Allen**, C 3rd Platoon 2/22 67/68. Another 3rd platoon guy with whom I had been in phone and computer contact with for about 1½ years, but had never seen in person since Vietnam.

David and Judy Milewski graciously agreed to host this get together with a barbecue on the afternoon of the 18th. David and Judy's house has a great view of Orange County and the weather was warm and the company was fantas-

tic. Meeting and visiting with Ken Allen was just as you can imagine, a great time that happens when we get together. We shared pictures, stories, and if you can imagine, Ken left several hours later than he originally planned. It was fun getting caught up with Ken.

That evening, David asked me where we were going next. To understand me, just picture a guy that gets an idea, then takes the next step, and then the next step, and then the next step. Planning the trip was simple to I; start driving to the first objective, David's house, and then head east. David is a planner who likes to look at an idea, and then plan the complete route. He was a good sport, but I could see that he needed more detail than me. In short, the next morning he took me to his AAA outlet, and got us the maps for all of the states we would be traveling through. All that I had brought was an atlas dated in 2001. He looked at the atlas and immediately e-mailed **Jim May!** Little did I know then, just how often Jim was to get an e-mail from David telling him about our trip together. I sat down and planned the trip looking at the maps and even going as far as marking each Veterans city on the maps. (I have to admit, the trip would have been difficult with out those maps.)

Our first stop after leaving California was **Terry Sharp's**, C 2/22 67/68, house just outside Kingman, Arizona. Terry was in the second platoon from Sept 67-Sept 68. When I called him Tuesday morning and asked if we could stop by, he graciously asked if we needed a place to stay, (we did), and invited us for dinner. He and his wife Cathy, live in the middle of a valley on 51 acres. He said to call when we got close and he would meet us at the turnoff to his house. His house is 3 miles from paved road in the middle of a desert Valley. It is beautiful with the high desert clear skies. We hooked up with Terry and then Terry and Cathy fixed us a great dinner and breakfast the next morning. Terry has been to a mini-reunion but never to the big ones. We encouraged them to come to Seattle next year. Terry's ex-boss stated that he could do more on a backhoe with one hand than anyone he had ever seen using both hands. It turned out that ⁷ David and Terry had gone through basic training

and AIT together. Once again, we showed pictures, shared stories, and just had a fun time being together. It was the first time seeing Terry since Vietnam. They were very gracious and made us feel welcome. Thanks Terry and Cathy!

When we left Terry's at 10 o'clock the next morning and looked at a map, David pointed out that we would not make it to our next stop, **Jim Nelson's** farmhouse in Jewell, Kansas in one day. We drove to Albuquerque, New Mexico and settled in for the night. We left the next morning heading for Kansas. The temperature was 26 degrees and it got colder as we headed for Colorado. David was riding along and noticed that there was white stuff on the trees and sides of the road and asked me what that was. I said it probably had something to do with the fact that the temperature outside was 21 degrees. He was very glad that he had switched from shorts to jeans! You know how those California boys like their shorts.

We ended up that night in Hays, Kansas. It looked like we had finally caught up with the big storm ahead. We got into the rain in the late afternoon. When I called Jim Nelson that afternoon, he said it had rained around 5 ½" in the past 3 days, making his road impassable. We would have to park our car and ferry in on his 4-wheel ATV. Jim and Sharon Nelson live on the farm his grandfather started back in the early 1900's. David and I both thought he was kidding but when we got to the turnoff to Jim's farm, there he was with the ATV. Jim said to pack light and hop on. Jim took David first and then came back for me.

We got to fire Jim's rifle in his front yard, and killed a couple of cans and a gallon jug. It was a lot of fun looking at Jim's collection of farm equipment in his outbuildings. He also has a 1968 Camaro Rally Sport that he bought after arriving home from Vietnam. After seeing his collection of cars and equipment, it was clear that Jim likes to keep the stuff he buys.

The next day, Jim took us on a tour of the local farms and we had dinner with his friends Larry and Merlin. Larry was a Vietnam vet who had

been wounded. We showed my slideshow and looked over David's pictures. Once again, we had a great time visiting with our combat brothers. Jim Nelson was in my squad in the 3rd Platoon when I arrived in Vietnam. Jim and I filled a bunch of sandbags in Vietnam. We also went on LP's and Ambush patrols together. He went on to become the brigade artist in Vietnam and continues his career as an artist. He published a book of his paintings along with comments of many of the people in the paintings. His paintings hang in many galleries across the country.

We called **Dan Streit**, who just lives 16 miles from Jim, who was busy that day at a trap shoot. He agreed to meet us the next morning for breakfast. Dan was with D company 2/22 and served in 69.

We got up the next morning, had a brief but enjoyable visit with Dan Streit and headed on to **Coy Thomas's** house in Findley, Ill. Coy Thomas was with us in Vietnam, Company C 2/22, Nov 67-Nov 68. Coy was part of the famous ambush patrol, where the patrol was in the right spot to kill the VC mortar squad after they had finished mortaring our lager site and were walking down the road laughing. We got the last laugh this time!

I called Coy and he said it was 6 hours from Jim Nelson's house to his. Well, we left at 11 and arrived at Coy's at 9:30 that night. Coy was in the second platoon and was great in firefights but his present day sense of time is not the greatest. It was great fun seeing Coy and getting to see where he lived, hunted, and visiting the restaurant that he goes to every morning for coffee.

In the morning, we headed over to **John Mart's** house 30 miles away. Unfortunately, John did not answer his phone or the doorbell, so we headed south to Montgomery Alabama to visit Bill and Martha John Allison. John Marts called us and we had a good phone visit. John Marts was in the 1st platoon, in Charlie Company. He saw plenty of action including being a member of the "Tiger One ambush patrol", during Fire Base Burt. The patrol was stranded and spent the

night in a bomb crater, "Killing only the ones that found the bomb bunker!"

Bill Allison was our first company commander in Vietnam. He commanded Charlie company three different times in the time frame Sept 67-Sept 68. We arrived at Bill and Martha Johns the next morning at their beautiful brick house. They took us to their country club for lunch, and then Bill gave us a tour of Montgomery and the air-base. We went to dinner at Montgomery's finest barbeque. If you know Bill and Martha John, you can bet that everywhere we went it was first class all the way. Just the way you would want your Company commander to live. After all, without his leadership, many of us would not have got back to the states.

Well, the first 10 days of the trip were upon us, so David made his airplane reservation and the next morning I took him to the airport for his trip back to California. David, I could not have made this trip with out your company and enjoyed our time together. Your sense of humor, your maps, your GPS, all of your text messages to Jim May telling him what a fun time you were having. Your description of me, "Looks like a monkey trying to f--- a football!" It was a time of laughing, reflection, comradeship, and just one hellava lot of fun. We laughed our way across the country.

As I headed to Jeff and Kay Condit's house in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, the car was very quiet and a little lonely. **Jeff Condit** was also in the 2nd platoon of Charlie Co. 2/22 from Sept 67-Sept 68. Jeff and Kay welcomed me to Tennessee. We had a great dinner and then Jeff and I went to a meeting, and came home and shared our pictures and memories.

After leaving Jeff, I continued on to my Uncles house in Oklahoma. I had not seen him in 30 years. I also caught up with 3 cousins, a great aunt, and a second cousin while I was in Oklahoma.

I then headed to Missouri to visit another cousin. He took me fishing two days, where we caught small mouth and wide mouth bass. Then I

headed home from there. It was just a little 2 and a ¼ day jaunt of driving straight thru to Vancouver, Washington.

To conclude, this was a dream trip. I got to visit with 9 of my Vietnam combat brothers, and got to see where they live. I traveled through 22 states and put 9222 miles on my car in 20 days. What a rush it was for me to get the opportunity to make this Rolling Reunion a reality. Luckily for us, the gas prices seemed to go down every time we filled up the car.

David and Judy Milewski, Ken Allen, Terry and Cathie Sharp, Jim and Sharon Nelson, Dan Streit, Coy Thomas and his girlfriend Nancy, John Marts, Bill and Martha John Allison, and Jeff and Kay Condit. On the way, we also talked to our pals, Jim May and **Austin Kreeger** and they gave us chuckles and advice along the way. (Jim May can find any information you toss at him, and boy, did David test him.)

Jerry Rudisll C 67/68

Round Circle The Truth is Spoken Here

This is going to be a hard story to write. Not because it is sad or anything like that, but because it is so hard to define the feelings from being where I was and doing what I was doing. I just got home yesterday afternoon and I am still buzzing and trying to pin down the emotions from the experience.

Last year at this time, Barb and I went to Clarks Hill, SC and attended a Veterans program at the Bethany Baptist Church. Bethany is the boyhood parish of my friend, Frazier Dixon. Frazier and I served together in Vietnam and I was with him when he was killed in action on December 3, 1969. I returned to Clarks Hill last year and met the friends and family and it was a very very hearty healing experience for all involved.

This year, I was invited down there again. I wanted to return. I brought them an Eagle

feather in a display case and a flag that was flown in memoriam for my friend. There were some people that I didn't get to meet last year. They found out about my visit too late and didn't make it. This year, I stayed four days and three nights and got to meet some key relatives that I desperately wanted to meet.

Anthony Morgan, Frazier's best friend from high school, paid for three nights lodging for us at the Marriott. That was a very nice thing to do. We were going to stay at a local LaQuinta motel. To ease the burden of having to pay for lodging allowed us to stay longer. The fine folks and other Veterans that attended the program also pitched in and gave us an envelope with some cash for gas and expenses. What unbelievable thoughtfulness. All of this generosity was a beautiful gesture on their part.

They made me feel like a hero. Like I was doing something special. Maybe I did expend effort to drive down there, but it was them that provided me with healing by their friendship and acceptance of me and my family as their own.

We drove down in three segments. Wednesday evening for a few hours just to get some miles under our belts, then a long day Thursday covering about 700 miles. We had a short day Friday as we rolled in to Augusta, GA about 3:00 p.m. We checked in on a day when the rain and fog had covered the city like a blanket.

Friday night, we were supposed to go to Mrs. Scott's North Augusta, GA home and see her gardens. She is proud of her gardening skills, and at 92 years of age still feeds herself and friends with the vegetables she grows. She is an inspiration. She is responsible for putting on the Veterans program for the Veterans in the community at her own expense. It was so foggy, that we did not go driving around but instead, just met Shirley Luke, our friend and contact, and had a nice casual dinner at the S & S Cafeteria.

Shirley stayed at her mother's place in Clarks Hill, we returned to the Marriott where the kids swam in the indoor pool. Barb and I relaxed in the hot tub to soothe the tightness of our mus-

cles from the long drive.

Saturday, I paid a visit to the grave site of my friend. Last year, I saw the site needed some repair as the concrete top was crumbling. I mentioned sending money down to help with the cost of repairs, but nothing was said about my offer. Low and behold, when I get down there, the whole thing was redone; a new landscaping and a much needed brightening of the headstone. Mrs. Scott had been responsible for the expense of having the site upgraded and it looked great.

After the cemetery visit, we went to the Clarks Hill Lake and Dam and walked around a bit. We had some time to kill before the program started at 3:00 p.m. They renamed the Clarks Hill dam. It is called the J. Strom Thurmond lake and dam now, but the locals will forever know it as the Clarks Hill dam. I am in that camp. Thurmond doesn't deserve the moniker in my opinion.

The Veterans program played to a full house at the Hosanna Baptist Church. The Bethany Church was undergoing roof replacement. Hosanna offered the site for this years event. I met with several Veterans from the previous year. I remembered most of them and they remembered me. I also got to meet Frazier's sister. When the family was young, the Mom divorced and remarried. Her new husband moved the family to Philadelphia. Frazier wanted to stay in Clarks Hill, so he stayed with his Grandfather and two cousins, Dan and Lois. The sister, Shirley, and other siblings went north. Frazier was raised largely by his Grandfather and aunt.

Shirley was there and we met for the first time. Like many of the people from the area, she didn't know what to believe as far as what the Army told them. The casket was sealed, so they never saw a body. Many believed Frazier could possibly be alive as a prisoner of war or just missing in action. Amazing was the distrust in believing what the Army officials told them about his death.

It wasn't until I came along last year that they learned the entire truth of what happened that¹⁰ fateful night in December on a battlefield in Viet-

nam. I was there with Frazier the night he was killed. I saw him alive, then saw him dead. It was this first hand account that meant so much for the family and friends to hear. They were in disbelief for all these years. I believed it, but never made sense of it as I never knew anything of his existence other than as a soldier in the American war in Vietnam.

I also met Dan, the cousin he grew up with, and Lois, Dan's sister. I had met other cousins and neighbors of this small tight knit community a year earlier. Dan and I talked a lot. Dan needed the closure and asked me some pretty pressing questions, but I swallowed my own pain and relived some of that night to soothe his mind and give him answers to questions he had struggled with for almost 40 years.

At the program, I was asked to speak a little. I kept it brief, but I did have this Eagle feather to give to the community. A spiritual Elder I know from Wisconsin gave me this feather to give to them. He told me that the feather was symbolic of the Warrior Spirit of my friend, and by giving them this feather, I was returning his spirit back to them as I was with him when he died and holding it with me for many years.

I put the feather in a case and presented it to them along with a flag, also in a wooden case, folded in the traditional triangle style. The flag was flown at a Native American Pow Wow in Northern Minnesota at an honoring ceremony in August. After last year, I was able to fly Frazier's flag. Before that, I guess I just wasn't ready to fly it and see his spirit wave goodbye. I felt I needed to hold on to his spirit. I didn't know why, but found out that I was holding on to it because I had to return it to Clarks Hill. After last year, I was able to complete the mission and say goodbye to my friend.

Now, for the really good part, we ate a magnificent banquet in the church dining hall. Fried chicken, peach cobbler, baked mac n' cheese, green beans, stuffing with gravy, along with red velvet cake with a cream cheese pecan frosting that was to die for! The dinner was very nice and we sat around for a couple of hours talking and

growing friendships.

We returned to the Marriott and spent the rest of the evening in a haze after the days activities. Sunday had us up and walking around the old downtown of Augusta, Georgia. It was a cool morning, but a bright sunny day. After a brief swim in the hotel pool, we went back to Clarks Hill lake and dam and walked around there a little and went to the visitor center.

At 1:30 p.m , we met Shirley Luke at Sam Marshall's little grocerette/bait and tackle, and anything you might need store on the highway. I met Sam at the program and he was glad to see us on his turf as he invited us to stop in at the store the day before. Shirley came and we followed her to Dew Drop Inn Road. We turned into the woods on Dew Drop Inn, and went just a short 1/4 mile or so and came into view of a bunch of houses. They were scattered around, not in order like a suburban development, and faced this way and that. The dirt road was wide then narrow. Kids were outside playing, people standing around here and there. Smoke coming from chimneys as the day experienced a cold front as winter reminded us all that is was near.

This year, we took the two oldest Grandkids with us. It was a joy to have them. We went to Debra's house first. Debra is Frazier's first cousin and lived in the house next to where Frazier grew up. Debra has eleven bothers and sisters. Five of the sisters still live on Dew Drop Inn. We went from house to house. Some had food and we ate. Some just were at home. As we went from house to house, a few joined our troop and we walked to the spring where the water was retrieved in an earlier time. We went to the washing hole where laundry was done. It came alive and I could see it all.

And the food! Greens, greens with okra, pork hocks, fried chicken, barbequed chicken, sweet potatoes, baked mac and cheese, corn bread, sweet tea. Man, I ate and ate. We talked about each others lives as we explained the differences between the cultures and the North and South. I told them that I cooked Italian food in those large quantities at one time in my life. I fed

the family too. We agreed that next time I come down there, I'd get a kitchen to cook and I would make a real authentic spaghetti and meatball dinner for all of Dew Drop Inn.

That's when I got invited to the Family Reunion which is due to take place next July Fourth weekend in 2009. I wondered if they were kidding, but they meant it. We are invited if we want to be there. I can't quite explain the feeling of being there, in this enclave, of family and distant relatives, all living and sharing their food and their lives with us and each other. This was no special dinner, this was everyday life. That's what made it so great. We were treated just like family with no pretending. One sister will cook one day, another will cook the next. People from the houses were coming and going. Some would eat a plateful right there, others would wrap up some food and take it home. This is real community and not at all unlike the Native communities in Northern Wisconsin and Minnesota, or my own family in an earlier time.

I came away determined to start a tradition and cook my Mother's recipe of Italian "gravy". The red sauce with spaghetti and meatballs. Sausage, lamb shanks and neck bones along with good bread and salad. I'll do it once a month and I'll be starting this weekend on Sunday.

To be there and share this repast. To be there and be accepted like kin is an experience that is indescribable to me. As it happened, I sat there and soaked it all in. There were so many hugs from so many people and so many "Drop in any time" invitations. Bob will take me fishing, Les will fix my car. Debra and her sisters will be cooking so there is no way a person would starve.

All in all, another year has passed. Another fabulous trip to the boyhood home of a man that I met in Vietnam on the battlefield. What a journey this life has to offer if we are willing to make it.

Many years ago, I embarked on a healing path and didn't know what to expect or if anything at all was to be expected. The healing has come and it continues. It is out there for all of us. We

need patience and faith in something. I am a lucky man for all of this to happen to me in a few short days. And they tell me they are the lucky ones to have met me. What an honor, what an experience. It can never be duplicated, but I can relive it, moment by moment each and every day.

What I want other Veterans to understand is that it took me many years and a lot of pain to get this far in dealing with the horrors of war. I am no hero for doing this, I was just there when he died and have had the honor of meeting his kinfolk 39 years later. I hope that my actions inspire other Veteran Brothers to seek out the demons that have haunted them and start or continue to heal from emotional wounds. I also know that all Veterans don't have the same feelings and weren't affected the same way. I totally respect them in every way, just as we all stood tall on the battle field, I believe we all stand tall these many years later.

Peace to you and all you hold dear.

Thanks,

Joe Spado B 69/70
Spadoma

Vietnam Vet Branded "Panhandler" for Handing Out Memorial Poppies

By Michelle Malkin • November 25, 2008 10:19 AM

Big John is a Vietnam veteran and VFW leader who works tirelessly on charitable efforts for our troops. Last year, my family and I attended his Thanksgiving feast for wounded vets at the VFW in Arlington, VA. John's got a heart of gold and an infectious, can-do attitude.

Now, he's in trouble. Some petty bureaucrats have branded him a "panhandler" and repeatedly threatened him with arrest for handing out "Buddy Poppies" on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The Rutherford Institute has come to his aid:

A local veteran is speaking out after police threatened to arrest him for distributing 'Buddy Poppies' or memorial flowers at the National Mall in Washington D.C. Now the Charlottesville-based Rutherford Institute has stepped in and filed a first amendment lawsuit against the National Park Police.

John Miska enjoys volunteering and spends most of time helping injured veterans and distributing 'Buddy Poppies.' "They're handed out as a remembrance of veterans sacrifice. The poppies are red representing the blood the soldiers shed and it's a reminder and it gives people pause to think," said John Miska, Veteran.

Recently the National Park Police threatened to arrest Miska for handing out his Poppies on the National Mall in Washington D.C. "People see me standing there and they approach me and ask may I have a Poppy and I give them a Poppy. If people are moved to offer a donation we accept the donations," said Miska. According to president of the Rutherford Institute Miska hasn't done anything wrong, he has only expressed his first amendment rights. "People occasionally give him money. There's a statute it's a D.C. law that says you can't aggressively solicit money, but he doesn't do any of that. We feel it's a violation of the first amendment of the United States Constitution which guarantees you the right to assemble or guarantees you the right to free speech to hand out Buddy Poppies," said John Whitehead, President, Rutherford Institute.

Miska says this experience isn't going to stop him from his mission and that it will only encourage him to do more. "I took an oath to the constitution to preserve protect and defend and I feel if you don't stand up for you rights you will lose those rights," said Miska. CBS19 has tried contacting the U.S. Park Police, but they have not returned the phone call. . The Rutherford Institute is waiting on the government to answer the complaint. What happens next will depend on the U.S. Attorney General's response.

John is undaunted. And he's busy with holiday planning and volunteering. He let me know he's working on a Christmas party at Walter Reed for 300 wounded soldiers and their families and asked me to spread the word. Any cash donations or gifts would be most welcome. Last year, Miska and his crew handed out MP3 players to hundreds of soldiers.

We will accept Christmas cards to hand out as well over the Holidays. They must be unsealed so they may be inspected. If someone wants to send a specific gift we will hand out tickets and draw by number to hand out gifts that we receive. They must be unwrapped and in original factory packaging. If someone wants to send wrapping paper and tape along with a note or card we will include that with gift. A suggestion would be a gift card to a major store, restaurant or gas station with a Christmas card. Donations may be sent to

**VFW Post 8208
PO Box 653
Ruckersville VA 22923**

Place a memo note that donation is Christmas fund.
We are a 501c19 Veterans Service Organization for tax purposes and will provide IRS donation letters upon request for tax returns.
Help out if you can!

The board of VN 222 passed a motion to donate \$100 to Big John Miska on 12-02-08 through VFW post #8208, PO Box 653, Ruckersville, Va. 22923. Good move fellows.

On 12-13-08 we received a *Thank You* response from VFW Post 8209. In part the response reads, "With your support of the VFW programs we are a visible presence in the hospital of Veteran and Public support to our fighting men and women during the holiday season. We of the VFW Post 8208 Salute You!" The letter is signed by John P. Miska CDR.

New Finds

William R. Deckard

1017 East North St.
P.O. Box 333
New Harmony, IN 47631
812-682-4837
wmdeckard@sbcglobal.net
B Co. 25th ID, 1968 to 1969

Jerry D. Smith

14914 385th Ave.
Mansfield, SD 57460
605-887-3745
sjsmith@nrctv.com
B Co. 25th ID, Sep. 68 to Sep. 69

Thomas J. Taluzek

8614 Woodvale Dr.
Darien, IL 60561
630-985-1397
B Co. 25th ID, 66 to 67

Timothy W. Albright

1170 Carroll Avenue
Lawrenceburg, IN 47025
812-537-0132
twalbrig@hotmail.com
Recon Platoon Aug. 69 to Aug. 70

Comments: Tim would like to find **Tim King**, **Richard Ammonette**, **Steve Whistler** and **Charles Martin**.

Ken Cash

Box 5979
Incline Village, NV 89450
775-831-6156
Kencash21@aol.com
C Co. 25th ID, March 69 to March 70

George O'Brien

19 Craig Drive
Fort Mitchell, AL 36856
344-855-3799
Gob19@ctvea.net
HHC & C Cos. 25th ID, March 68 to Apr. 69

Wyndham D. Jones

602 Southwest Jaslo Ave.
Port St. Lucie, FL 34953
772-336-3648
C Co. 25th ID, 68 to 69

Comments: Wyndham is looking for, **Sp-4 Henry, Sgt Whittle, Lt Lilly**, (I contacted **Gilbert Lilly**.) Anyone in the 4th Squad that was in the patrol that engaged the VC in the on 18 SEP 68.

Eric Steffensen

3981 Freed Ave.
San Jose, CA 95117
408-241-8618
steffensen@sbcglobal.net
A Co. 25th ID, Apr. 70 to Aug. 70

Comments: Eric had photos that he wished to share. I put him in touch with **Steve Irvine** and the photos are now posted on the web site. Anyone who has photos they wish to have posted on the web site should contact Steve at sirvine@us.ibm.com

Stephen R. Lassere

1153 Highway 307
Thibodaux, LA 70301
985-633-6633
donnykord@aol.com
B Co. 25th ID, July 66 to Nov. 67

Comments: Stephen would like to find **William L. Huff**.

Joseph M. Goike

28565 Anchor Dr.
Chesterfield, MI 48047
586-949-1436
sallyshrimp@yahoo.com
A Co. 25th ID, 1968 to 1969

Comments: Joe writes, "It was great to hear from **LT Nash** over the holidays. I also talked to **Pa-looka, Otis Hines** and **Lumpy** from our unit. Want to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. God Bless you all. I will stay in contact."

Thomas E. Pentecost

20418 Willow Trace Dr.
Cypress, TX 77433-6026
281-373-3407

papa-t@sbcglobal.net

C Co. 4th & 25th ID, Jun 67 to Jun 68

Comments: Tom writes, "I served with 2/22nd MECH from June 1967 to June 1968. I was with the 4th & 25th IDs. The unit changed colors during my tour. It's been 40 years and I don't remember a lot. But I think I was with Company C. Maybe you can help me find out if this was the right Company. Our base Camp was Dau Tieng. I ran across your website while looking for info on Triple Deuce. Glad I found you."

Richard F. Stoltz

605 Easthill St.
Canton, OH 44720-4311
330-499-2693

rickdibit@aol.com

A Co. 25th ID, Dec. 69 to Dec.70

Comments: Richard writes, "I served with Co A 2/22 MECH Inf, 25th Inf from Dec 69 to Dec 70. Some of the names I remember are **SSGT Wayne Weaver, Ralph Gibbons, David Fouey, Larry Gartski, Doc Hicks, Ed Skosnick, Beeh Jones, David Coffey, Capt. Lechner.** I remember the tracks 'Think Snow' and 'Alice Dee III' "

H. Scott Kirkpatrick

P.O. Box 399
Essex, CT 06426-0399
860-767-1849

hskirkpatrick@snet.net

HHC,25th ID,Mar 68 to Mar 69

Comments: Scott would like to contact **Wilkie Wilkerson, Ed Reeves, Jim Santage, Johnny Johnson, Dean Plumb** & those who served in the 4.2" Mortar Platoon with him. He keeps in touch with **OB O'Brien**. Scott writes, "I was the 'FDC' Squad Leader for the 4.2 inch Mortar Platoon 'High Angle High' and served with O'Brien when I became 'short.' My last battle was Dau Tieng 2/21-2/23 - 1969."

Jackie R. Laws

1301 Jamestown Rd.
Morgantown, NC 28655
828-584-4573

B Co. 25th ID, Sep 68 to Sep 69

Guest Books Hits

Name: **Timothy W. Albright**

Email: twalbrig@hotmail.com

Date: 9-24-08

Comments: I was in the recon platoon August of 69 to August of 70. I would like to hear from my Nam friends.

Name: **Richard Carter**

Email: richard.e.carter@us.army.mil

Date: 10/16/2008

Phone: 910-528-4660

Comments: I found your site searching for pics for a project I'm making for my dad. His name is **John Thomas "Tommy" Carter**, he was on a Comand track with HQ Plt, B Co.2-22 based out of Cu Chi 68-69. If anyone knows or served with him I would like to hear from you. Thank you for your service.

Name: **Bill Schwindt**

Email: c322locate@aol.com

Date: 10/26/2008

Phone: 503 342 6355

Comments: Does anyone have a photo of **Douglas J Sullivan**? KIA with C222 1-8-67.

Name: **Charlie Paree**

Email: cparee@verizon.net

Date: 10/31/2008

Phone: 813-888-7071

Comments: I Served With Charlie Company 1968 to1969 in Dau Tieng , Tay Ninh

Name: **Burt Lockwood**
Email: aptfin@hotmail.com
Date: 11/04/2008

Comments: I was with the Battalion as S1, during the last phase of its duty in Vietnam (1970). Nathan Vail was the battalion Cmdr and Townsend Clark, HHC Cdr.

Name: **Kay Ingram**
Email: ingramk@wincowifi.com
Date: 11/11/2008

Comments: I just wanted to let you guys know that I'm thinking about you today. God bless you all.

Name: **Judie Evans**
Email: juju52246@yahoo.com
Date: 11-11-06

Comments: Thank You to all of our Veterans, all of our soldiers serving now and to the young men and women who will choose to continue to serve this Great Country in the future. God Bless America and God Bless each and every one of you for your sacrifices, your duty to country and the love and respect that you have for each other.

Name: **Mike Galassi**
Email: mgalassi@iwon.com
Date: 11-15-08

Comments: "I was with C Co. 2-22 in 69. Had a friend named Levy from Los Angeles, I was wounded in May of 69 and was sent home. Would like to know if Levy made it okay. Thanks for any help. Mike.

Name: **Spadoman**
Email: spado@mac.com
Date: 11/22/2008
Phone: 715 209-0241

Comments: Just returned from a Veterans Day program in **Frazier Dixon's** home town of Clarks Hill, SC. (Dixon was KIA on Dec. 3, 1969, he was with Co B Triple Deuce). I was there last year as well. I met more family members, the ones that couldn't make it last year. It was a

wonderful experience with a lot of closure and healing. I also made new friends for life and ate some unbelievably good Southern style home cooking.

Sorry guys, had to drive past the South Pittsburg, TN exit, but I had Grandkids in tow and no time to waste, maybe one of these days I'll get to stop at that Base Camp Bar.

Peace to all of you.

Name: **Clarence 'CJ' Simpson**
Email: cacie1@optonline.net
Date: 12/07/2008

Comments: Happy 'Pearl Harbor Day' to the "Original Boat People".

7 Dec 65 was the day that we were inducted (drafted) into the U.S.Army. Our Day of Infamy. I love you guys.

CJ

Name: **MA2 (EXW) MACARAEG, RICO**
Email: rico.j.macaraeg@kuwait.swa.army.mil
Date: 12/09/2008

Comments: I was perusing the internet for "triple deuce" and found you guys. Just wanted to pass by and send my thoughts. I am with a Mobile Security Unit operating in the Mid East right now. Thank you for your service some years ago.

MA2 (EXW) Macaraeg, Rico
MESD 222
"Triple Deuce"

Name: **George Dahl**
Email: gtdahl@ties2.net

Comments: Does anyone know what a combat loaded APC costs? It just occurred to me that I never got a bill for the one that was destroyed. They can take it out of my retirement.

Name: **Noble Wilcox aka Andy**

Email: noblenjan@aol.com

Date: 12/26/2008

Phone: 310-406-6224

Comments: Does anyone remember 19Aug1969
Boi Loi woods along the Saigon River? A 222

Name: **Paul Weinman**

Email: paulweinman@yadtel.net

Date: 12/28/08

Comments: Thanks to those who have obviously
worked very hard to establish a positive link to
the past.

Hellos & Comments

Thomas D. Burts

151 Sullivan

Simpsonville, SC 29680

864-243-0008

tmb007@msn.com

B Co. 4th ID, Sep 66 to Sep 67

Comments: Tom writes, "I would like some of my
old Buddies to e-mail or call
me."

Address Change

John Eberwine - Vietnam Veteran Sep 67 - Sep
68

Charlie Co 2nd Bn (Mech) 22nd Inf Rgmt 25th
Infantry Div

Purple Heart, CIB, Army Commendation with "V"

501 West New York Avenue 2nd Floor

Somers Point, New Jersey 08244

Cell 609.703.3172

vietvet222@verizon.net

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 Send orders to: Jim May
 P.O. Box 665
 Norridgewock, ME 04957
 Phone 207-634-3355 E-mail jlmay@tds.net

Include your name, address, phone number and email address. If I'm out of something I'll let you know when to expect it. If you'd like something special, let me know. The guy who does the embroidery is an Air Force Vet and has great respect for you Infantrymen. If there is a way to put the logo on something he'll do it. Call me at 207-634-3355 or email to jlmay@tds.net

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 Send orders to: Jim May
 P.O. Box 665
 Norridgewock, ME 04957
 Phone 207-634-3355 E-mail ilmav@tds.net



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